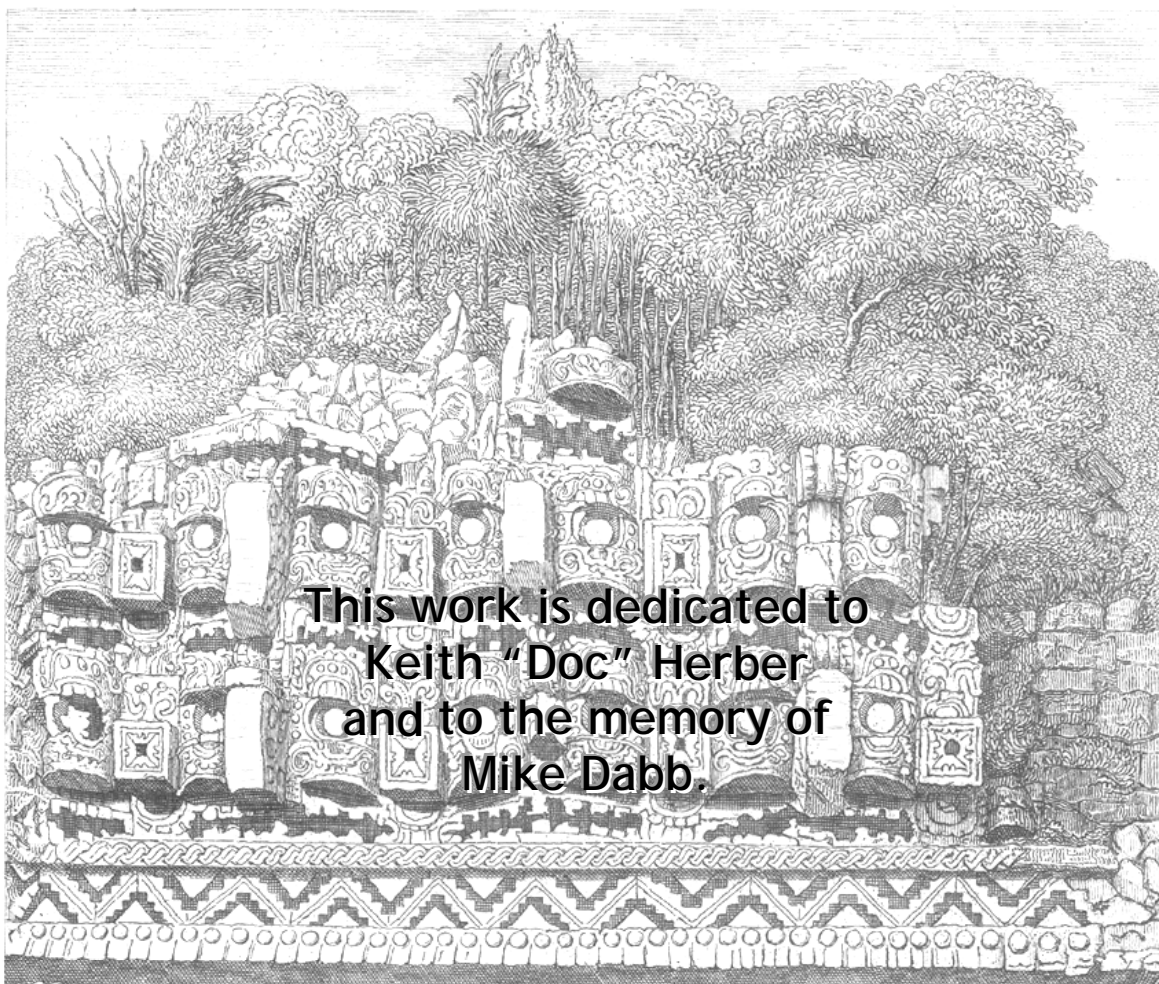


Notes on the Turner Codex

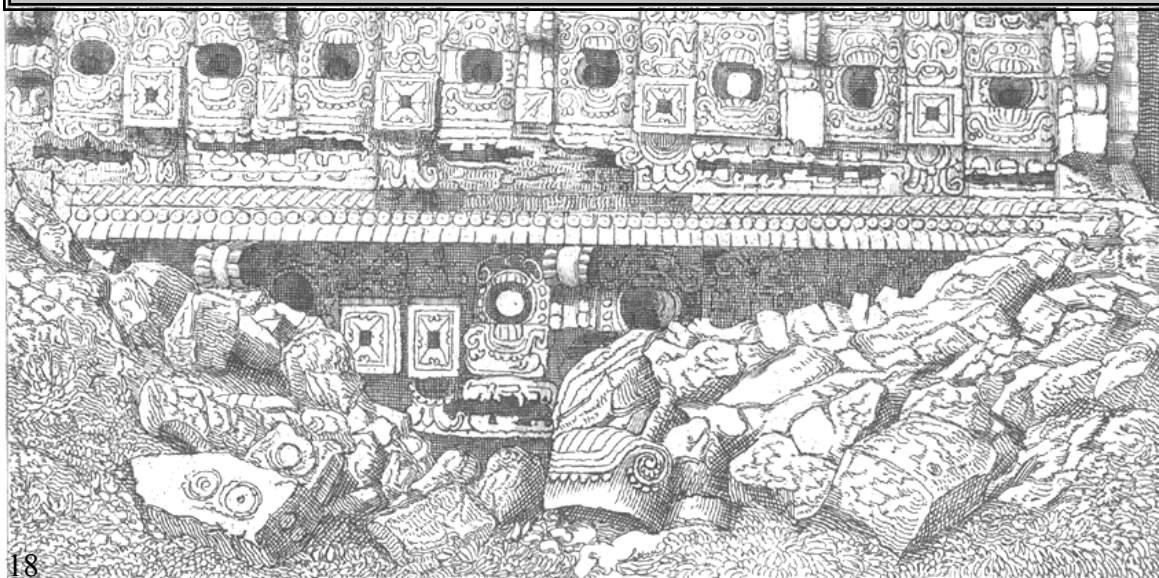
By Bret Kramer

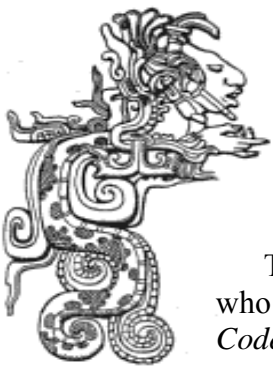


This work is dedicated to
Keith "Doc" Herber
and to the memory of
Mike Dabb.

Clear Credit

The *Turner Codex* is the creation of Keith Herber and originally appeared in his scenario "The Evil Stars" (as part of *Cthulhu Now*). Additionally it appears in a smaller role in Tim Wiseman's *Tatters of the King*. The information contained in this work is based that contained in these earlier works but also contains the author's extrapolations, inference, and expansions. Any errors, misinterpretations, or goofs are my fault, not theirs. Ditto for typos.





Introduction

This article is intended for Keepers who wish to make use of the *Turner Codex* (and its various editions) in their games. Use the information here to supplement the original source material or spark your own imagination as the germ of a new scenario. As with most things *Call of Cthulhu* oriented, pick and chose the information that works for you and your game.

The descriptions of the work's various editions are organized in a similar manner- a physical description of that version, an overview of that version's availability to investigators, comments on the contents of the work (for both those skimming the work and those who study it more intensively), game statistics for that edition, and finally comments on what investigators might learn about the work through research. This format has been developed for the forthcoming monograph *The Masks of Nyarlathotep Companion* and is used here in a slightly modified form. Note that I have retained the optional rules for "spell multipliers" as I found it convenient short-hand measure of the usefulness of a particular edition as a grimoire. In discussing spells, italicization of a spell name indicates that the description of the spell is incomplete or dangerously flawed. Likewise, spells are often give two names, the parenthetical version is the name used in the rule book while the first name is what might be suggested by the text.

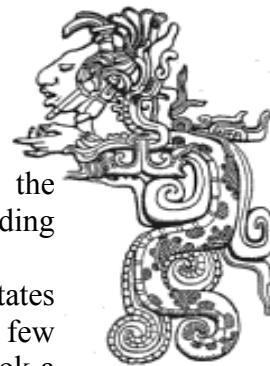
Thanks to Tom Lynch at Miskatonic River Press for letting me offer this little tribute to Keith Herber. His loss is still felt.

Origins of the Codex

The *Turner Codex* is an alleged piece of ancient Mayan literature, recovered and translated by Maplethorpe Turner, a 19th century amateur archaeologist and seeker of the strange. His translation was dismissed by academia and he is widely regarded as either a charlatan or a credulous dupe, tricked into believing in a preposterous forgery. As with so many pioneers, especially those who encounter the fringes of the truth we categorize as part of the Cthulhu Mythos, Turner's work was cast aside not because it was not true, but because it was a truth that was too terrible to bear.

The Maya, perhaps more so than any other pre-Columbian human civilization, bear traces of the civilization that once ruled the continent of Mu. When that civilization was destroyed in a great cataclysm (or series of cataclysms), some of the survivors fled to what we know of as North and South America, establishing petty kingdoms that were pathetic echoes of the glory that had been Mu. One of these kingdoms was Hemaerpi, in what is now Guatemala and Belize. Ruled for millennia by the a series of forgotten kings, the greatest power was lay with the priests of Qai-hwann, He Who Cannot Be Described. It was a dreamlike realm of narcotic pleasure and casual sadism, squat basalt hill-temples, and ceaseless warfare against their neighbors. After the first waves of humans from Asia into North America, the Muvian rulers of Hemaerpi, like their neighbors, enslaved these newcomers to work their fields and to fight their wars. The Muvian people themselves slowly declined and their civilization imploded in stupefied haze.

The petty Muvian kingdoms collapsed in a series of bloody wars,



coups, and rebellions, leaving broken fragments unable to sustain themselves without their slaves and magic. A few centers lingered on a while, foremost among these the temple of Qai-hwann at Tzamlyntz, which convinced one of the leaders of the rebellion against the old lords of Hemaerpi that they would crown him king, as he had slain all the earlier claimants to the throne. As part of his investiture, they made copies of their sacred texts, including those of Qai-hwann, as recorded by the great priest Dha-khurpa after the fall of Mu. Though lacking the technical sophistication of the Muvians of old, the priests hammered the glyphs into plates of Yal, the so-called 'copper from above', using a bastardized form of the Muvian tongue, understood by the inhabitants of Hemaerpi, slave and Muvian alike. While this successor state lasted little more than a few human generations, the plates created by the priests were entombed in the great pyramid of the first king where they remained for several millennia...

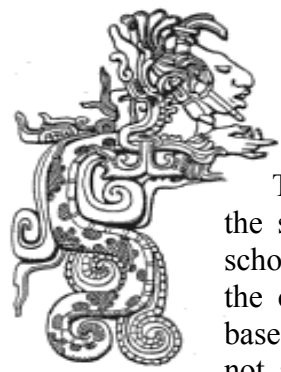
The Discovery of the Plates

The plates were discovered in the ruins of this tomb, long thought to be a hill, when a portion of it washed away after a hurricane. The plates, being made of an alien metal impervious to the passage of time, were washed downstream and spotted by villagers from the nearby settlement of Rio Craso. In 1891 the village was visited by the American explorer Maplethorpe Turner, who was attempting to locate undiscovered Mayan ruins in the jungles of Petén. When shown the plates, Turner immediately set out to find the site of their origin. Over a period of a few weeks he excavated the remains of the tomb/hill finding a cache of plates

and other artifacts, including the complete collection of plates regarding Qai-kwann.

Turner returned to the United States and, after showing the plates to a few scholars in the Boston area, undertook a systematic study of the plates in an attempt to translate them. This study grew increasingly obsessive, particularly after the death of Turner's wife in 1893. In that same year, Turner discovered critical similarities between the Mayan symbols on the plates with certain inscriptions in obscure (and often overlooked) ruins in Asia and the Pacific. Comparing these symbols to those hammered into the plates, Turner became convinced that there was a connection, a conviction further reinforced when he read Otto Dostmann's *Remnants of Lost Empires*, which contained a fragmentary translation of one of these inscriptions. Combining his knowledge of Quiché with this fragmentary understanding of the Muvian script (as given by Dostmann), Turner began a meticulous translation of the plates.

During this period, Turner became an almost total recluse, abandoning old friendships and routine correspondence with other scholars, save for those rare occasions when he was in need of some reference he could not obtain himself. He spent weeks pouring over manuscripts at Harvard's Widener Library or in the reading room at the Boston Athaeum. His fortune, badly diminished in the Panic of 1893, was rapidly used up in the purchase of rare books and the tracking down of often spurious leads or sources. Turner became estranged from his children, save his youngest son Wordsworth who assisted his father in his research.



Turner completed his translation in the spring of 1901 but no publisher or scholarly body would agree to publish the completed work. This refusal was based on several factors- Turner would not allow others to inspect or examine the plates, likewise he refused to reveal or explain his method of translation. Additionally, the sometimes ghastly rituals described in Turner's translation were also in direct conflict with the popular view of Mayan culture and religion. Finally, Turner's self-imposed isolation had generated much ill-will towards the man himself, dislike only heightened by Turner's haughty disregard for his fellow scholars and his lack of affiliation with any academic institution.

Undeterred, Turner sunk a large portion of his remaining wealth into the private publication of his translation. This book, entitled *Rites of the Ancient Maya Revealed*, was published in 1902 and sold very poorly, in no small part

due to several extremely critical reviews in the academic press. Turner, reclusive and bitter until the end, died in 1911, leaving his little remaining wealth to his son Wordsworth. In 1919 the Turner family home in Brookline, Massachusetts burned, destroying the house, many copies of Turner's translation, and apparently the original plates as well. The fire was ruled an arson, started by Wordsworth Turner in order to collect on an insurance policy for the home (and to conceal other criminal acts, see below). The younger Turner fled to the Caribbean, dying in the Dominican Republic in 1933.

Editions

Original Plates

Description

These plates were destroyed during the 1919 fire at the Turner home. Unless the Keeper wishes, they should only be available in the years before the fire, or alternately similar Muvian texts might be uncovered in Central America or other

Maplethorpe Turner, 1845 – 1911

Amateur archaeologist, explorer, and writer, Turner was the youngest son of Carleton Turner, a Georgia businessman. His three older brothers and father perished during the civil war, leaving Maplethorpe the sole inheritor of his family fortune by the age of 20. Turner used his inheritance to fund a number of investments in Central American and the Caribbean, increasing his fortune several times over.

At the age of forty, Turner sold most of his assets and retired from business altogether, much to the shock of his young wife and children, embarking on a series of self-funded explorations of Central and South America as well as the financing of several explorations he did not take part in personally, including the tragic Kenilworth expedition of British Guyana in 1886. He was considered an eccentric, albeit a respectable one.

In 1891 during an expedition into the interior of Guatemala's Petén Department, Tuner was shown several unusual objects discovered by local people, including two metal plates bearing what appeared to be Mayan script. Turner located the source of their artifacts in a nearby ruin of exceptional antiquity, including an intact set of plates, which he claimed represented an unknown Mayan text that has become known as the *Turner Codex*.



areas refugees from that civilization fled.

This work is a series of hammered metal plates of indeterminate antiquity. The plates are very regular, about 8" by 7½", and number just over one-hundred in total. Each plate is about ¼" thick. There are two columns of glyphs on every plate. Anyone making an ½ *Know* roll (or a normal *Know* roll if *Anthropology* or *History* are over base skill) will recognize them as Mayan symbols; any with any level of skill in *Mayan Hieroglyphs* will, with an *Idea* roll, notice certain unusual features that suggests they are dissimilar from any other know examples of that script.

The plates appear to be made of copper (or possibly a copper-rich bronze) but anyone examining them succeeding in a *Chemistry* roll can conclusively state that the alloy is unknown to modern chemistry, being extraordinarily durable, resistant to corrosion, and does not form copper's usual oxidized patina. This discovery costs 0/1 point of Sanity. A successful *Cthulhu Mythos* roll recognizes this as "yal", the so-called "copper from above", an alloy brought to Earth by several of the alien species who have visited his world.

Availability

These plates were destroyed in the fire that destroyed the Turner mansion in 1919. It is possible that some or even all of the plate survived- house fires typically burn at temperatures lower than the melting point of copper (or yal). If the Keeper wishes, the plates may be discovered as part of a private collection or among the effects of Wordworth Turner. Additionally, it is possible similar plates might be uncovered in some as yet undiscovered Muvian ruin in Mesoamerica or beyond.

Contents

Skimming¹

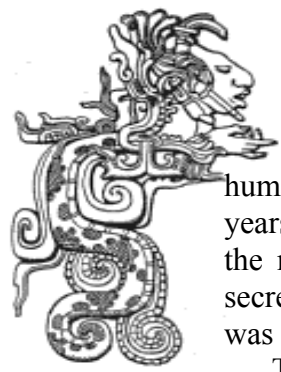
These tablets record the rites of the god Qai-hwann, "He Who Remains Unseen", "He Who Must Not Be Given a Name", "He That Bears the Great Sign", "He That Whispers All True Things". These prayers were carried away from a great disaster that destroyed a mighty empire and taken to the new kingdoms of the east. They are given in tribute to the new lord as a writ of his lordship over the kingdom.

The tablets record multiple prayers to Qai-hwann – invocations, blessings, oaths, and sanctifying rites for various sacred items. The rites involve a mixture of song and ritual bloodletting, proscribed by various astronomical alignments. The god itself is apparently bound or limited in some way, as the rites described within are intended to piece the powers that constrain Qai-hwann so that he might commune with his worshippers, including manifesting physically. While it is unclear from the text, the god appears to dwell either beneath a lake or within a city, or somehow both, in a place far distance, a place associated with the star "That Which Goes Before".

Thorough Reading

These tablets record the rites and rituals of the god Qai-hwann. Brought forth from the falling kingdoms of Mu to the west, by the great priest Dha-kurpa, these tablets apparently predate known

¹ These documents can only be skimmed by those with at least 40% in Mayan Glyphs. The Keeper may adjust the information conveyed to those with limited skills. At a minimum a few days of study can confirm that the text is actually Mayan, albeit a particularly ancient form and contain rites to a previously unknown god.



human history by tens of thousands of years at least. This copy, dedicated to the new king of Hemaerpi, records the secrets of Qai-hwann's worship, as it was by Qai-hwann's will that he ruled.

The central purpose of the tablets is to record the rites of Qai-hwann, a being described as "He Who Name Cannot Be Spoken" or possibly "He Who Cannot Be Given a Name", who dwells in a city beyond a lake which can only be reached when certain astronomical conditions are met. Qai-hwann is a curious god, said to coexist with the very fibers of the world and yet, also be kept apart from it save though the magic described by the tablets. He is also said to speak great truths always, but he cannot be seen or observed by men as his true face is too great and therefore he masks himself in a fog of lies. He is served by flying creature neither bird nor bat nor insect nor man but like and unlike all. Everything about the being is vague and unsettling, and there are dark signs that this being is far greater and more awful even than as described here; in one passage he is named as "He Who is The World's Hunger" or "He Who Hungers for the World"

The tablets record many of the rites of the god. The foremost of these invokes the god itself, requiring a set of ritually prepared and inscribed stele, but can only be done when the star "That Which Goes Before" (known in the west as Aldebaran) is visible in the sky. Other rites, called the "Unbreakable Pact", promise the spirit of a sacrifice to

the god in exchange for his favor. Those who have made this pact might create the sacred chime of T'ezcha Ha'ptl, an instrument said to attune the world to Qai-hwann's influence and to create great magic. They should be cast as close to the god as possible; apparently at sacred mountain peaks to the north

Reading 'Mayan'

The knowledge of the written form of the Mayan language (called K'iche' by modern scholars, or traditionally by its Spanish name Quiché) was lost after the destruction of the Mayan city-states by the Spanish in the 16th and 17th centuries, in part due to the intentional destruction of Mayan texts. In the 19th and early 20th century, only the numbers and certain astronomical signs could be accurately translated; most translation attempts incorrectly assumed some parallel between the Mayan glyphs and Egyptian Hieroglyphics. While important breakthroughs were made in the 1950s and 60s, it was not until the early 1970s that actual, if fragmentary, decipherment could be conducted. By the early 21st century tremendous progress in the field had made decipherment of the Mayan script a regular process.

Investigators operating before about 1973 should have no realistic chance of correctly translating the glyphs contained on the plates of Turner's codex. Only decades of work by linguists, archaeologists, and anthropologists were able to piece together the fragments that allowed a rediscovery of the symbols. In the fiction of the Cthulhu Mythos, however, lone scholars seem to have an uncommon ability to translate inhuman or lost languages without recourse to such legwork or scholarship.

and west. Qai-hwann's influence might also be called forth by means of a song and in combination the magic of both these elements are quite strong, including protecting the faithful from the magic of other lesser gods. His flying servants might be made to obey his priests by saying whispering certain secrets to them (there may be a missing plate discussion how to draw forth such beings). Those who ascend to visit the



home of the god need purify themselves with a ritual drink containing the supplicant's blood, chocolate, and a great number of obscure herbs and other substances. Finally, a complex rite is described that would sanctify a temple or city to Qai-hwann itself. Similar to the ritual that draws forth the god, a series of

Statistics

In Archaic Mayan Glyphs (-30% to skill, see note on Reading Mayan; for modern Mayanists, this penalty is eliminated if one of the tomes listed there is used as a supplemental source).

Sanity Loss 1d3/2d4+1, Cthulhu Mythos +5, Skill Check Hieratic Nacaal, +1 Anthropology, Spell multiplier x4, 16 weeks to study and comprehend. Spells: Great Prayer of Dha-khurpa (Call/Dismiss Hastur), Instrument of T'ezcha Ha'ptl (Chime of Tezchaptl), Song of Qai-hwann (Song of Hastur), Preparation of the Guardian (Bind Byakhee), Preparation of the Xocoatl of the Sky (Brew Space Mead), The Unbreakable Pact (Unspeakable Promise), Sanctification of the Stones (Free Hastur)

Research

Assuming the investigators are performing their work after Turner publishes his translation, a single *Library Use* roll can uncover the basic information about Turner's discovery of the tablets. Additional rolls can find the basic facts concerning Turner's life, the decade spent translating the work, and his death.

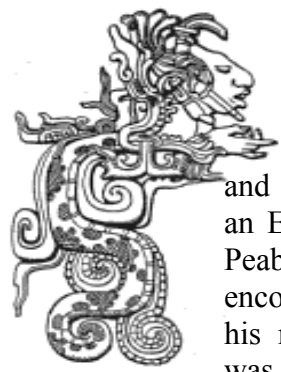
Investigators seeking a clear description of the plates, especially after their probable destruction in 1919 may locate one with two successful *Library Use* rolls. The first is a reference to a letter exchanged between the American Mayanist Edward Herbert Thompson

If investigators from any era before the modern wish to undertake their own translation of the original plates or other writings of the Muvian successor states of Mesoamerica (or Mu itself), they may be able to successfully do so if they can bring the following elements to bear:

- Knowledge of Quiché or other living Mayan language (assume a skill of 20% at a minimum)
- A Mayan (or late Muvian) text.
- A Mythos 'key' text showing the relationship between Mayan/Muvian and a living language. Turner used Dostmann's *Remnants of Lost Empires*. Other texts that may be used for a similar purpose include *The Zanthu Tablets*, *The Ponape Scripture*, *The Ghorl Nigral* (and *The Secret Mysteries of Asia*, which comments upon it), *The Rituals of Yhe*, and *The Ygoth Records*. Obtaining these texts is left to the investigators.
- Alternately, considering the fiction and game's fondness for reincarnation, someone who was a citizen of Mu or its successors in a previous life might have a flash of insight when attempting to translate the script, but such a supernatural discovery should have a significant Sanity cost, especially if done on a continuing basis of an otherwise inhuman tongue.

The mechanics of translation is left to the Keeper. Consider that it took Turner over a decade to make his translation; unless the needs of the plot indicate otherwise, similar endeavors should take an equivalently long time.

pecially inscribed stones are set, but the area and power of this spell is far greater, as the god itself may freely dwell within the area circumscribed by the stones regardless of season or if his faithful have called it forth. His place will be known to those who can see his sign, but such a symbol is never described.



and his friend Albert Duchamp, an Egyptologist working for the Peabody Museum. Duchamp encountered Turner soon after his return from Guatemala and was one of the few scholars who had a chance to examine the tablets before Turner took his reclusive turn. In a letter to Thompson, Duchamp describes the tablets (as per the description above) including a note about the curious metal they were hammered from:

“Turner’s plates- he says they are a codex- are most curious. He asked me to look at them to see if I noted any parallels between the symbols therein and those of the Egyptians. I could scarcely see any and told him as much. From everything I’ve seen of your work and from others working in Mesoamerica, I have no doubt they are quite similar to the script used by the Maya. If this is fakery, it was carefully done. One element that I cannot comprehend is that the plates are made of metal. From everything I know about the Maya, they worked in gold and copper and while I am no metallurgist, I am confident that this metal is of modern manufacture. Ancient coppers and bronzes always have a green patina and these plates are blemish free. The color is most certainly not that of gold and frankly looks to me to be some sort of modern bronze alloy, almost greenish, but of a far greater durability. He shewed me how the metal itself resists corrosion- a dab of the sulfuric rolled off like so much water; he also showed me how the metal might be bent with great effort but how it also slowly returns to its original shape over a few minutes once the force is no longer applied. If he allows it, I make take a few rubbings and pass them along to you, as I know how you find such things of interest.

Mayan Codices

The Maya were a literate people with a rich written language. While it is unclear how widespread literacy was, it is clear that among the elite writing was common and the art of writing was highly valued. Aside from carved inscription and paintings of the Mayan script, the Maya produced texts called *huun* after the Nahuatl word for paper or bark; we refer to them as codices (singular ‘codex’). These huun were folding books made of *amate* (or *amatl* in Nahuatl) a type of paper made with tree bark pulp sometimes whitened with lime. Codices, as best we are able to determine, were used to record histories, astronomical information, religious ceremonies, and myths, frequently blended together.

When the Spanish encountered the Maya people, they viewed the codices with great suspicion, believing them to record the rites of Mayan religion which they viewed as diabolic. Local religious leaders ordered them destroyed in the 16th century resulting in the annihilation of most of the codices. This intentional destruction was compounded by the climate of the region where the Mayans lived, as high humidity and high temperatures ruined most of those codices that survived the Spanish.

A few codices survived this period but went unnoticed until the 19th century when they were rediscovered by scholars. They are named for the cities in which they were rediscovered; images or reproductions of all these codices are available on line and may prove of interest to the Keeper.

This letter can be located among Thompson’s papers after his death in 1935; before that date, Thompson himself can relate this information. Duchamp may do so himself as well, though he died in 1911. Thompson’s papers can be located at any large East Coast American university or museum that the Keeper wishes.

Students of the Mythos can find a few tentative hints that connect the contents of the tablets to other Mythos tomes. With a successful *Cthulhu Mythos* roll and having access to Mythos texts discussing Mu find references to the post-Muvian kingdom of Hemaerpi, confirming its existence. The priest Dha-kurpa is mentioned by name in *The Zanthu Tablets* (though Copeland translates the name as Dak’hurpha). The

The Dresden Codex

Purchased in Vienna for the Royal Library of Dresden in 1739, the codex is thought to have been part of Cortez's gifts to Charles I. The best preserved, oldest, and with the finest art, it records astronomical tables for the Moon and Venus as well as religious rituals. Badly damaged during the firebombing of Dresden during the Second World War, it has been restored subsequently. The text measures eight inches high by (unfolded) eleven feet long.

The Madrid Codex

Originally thought to be two separate Codex fragments (the Troano Codex and the Cortes Codex) they were recognized to be segments of the same work in 1888 and reunited at the Museo de América. Of a poorer quality of art, the Madrid Codex is thought to have been produced after the arrival of the Spanish but before the destruction of the last Mayan city in 1697. The contents of the Madrid Codex deal with astrology and divination, particularly what dates would be best for certain activities, such as hunting, planting, or warfare.

The Paris Codex

Purchased by the *Bibliothèque Impériale* in 1832, this Codex was generally neglected until it was spotted, stacked near a fireplace, by scholar in 1859. It is in poor condition. The contents focus mainly on astrology and astronomical observations.

god Qai-hwann is also named as a deity of the Muvians; that being can be directly linked to Hastur in these sources as well.

Forged Plates

Description

These plates were made by Wordsworth Turner after his father's death and sold to several private collectors. Each thought they were purchasing the original Turner Codex itself. Since the originals had not been seen in two decades, this ruse went undetected until investigators working on behalf of William Randolph Hearst (who was negotiating with Turner to purchase the Codex), discovered evidence of the ruse,

resulting in a lawsuit and likely the fire that destroyed the Turner home.

This work is a series of hammered copper plates (depending on how old they are and how well cared-for, they should show signs of verdigris). The plates are regular 8" by 8" square and each plate is about 1/8" thick. There are two columns of glyphs on every plate (in the case of the poorest forgeries, this will not be the case). Microscopic examination will reveal the copper sheets were cut from a larger sheet, likely some sort of roofing material. The plates are flexible and can be bent by hand.

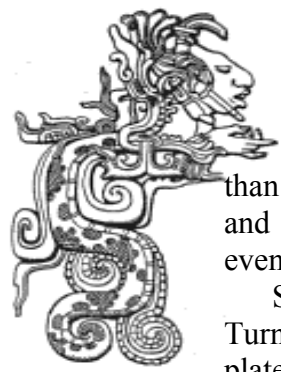
The glyphs on the plates appear (with a 1/2 Know roll) to be Mayan. If the forgeries were accurate

copies, the glyphs will appear as those described above for the original plates. Anyone making a *Mayan Hieroglyphics* roll will recognize them as being a mish-mash of unrelated symbols, lacking any meaning, cohesion, or grammar, though occasionally direct copies of various known Mayan texts including the *Madrid Codex* (c.f.) can be spotted.

Availability

Investigators active before 1920 might be able to obtain a copy from Wordsworth Turner himself. A successful *Credit Rating* roll can convince the younger Turner to sell them the plates, though his asking price of \$500 is a substantial amount. Any such bargaining should be role-played rather





than converted to a few die rolls and might constitute an evening's play on their own.

Several of Wordsworth Turner's forged copies of the plates survived into the 21st century and remain in the hands of private collectors, though at least one version is obtained by the Smithsonian in 1978; a single plate is displayed as part of an exhibit on forgeries, identified as "Apocryphal Mayan text, c. 1915". If any of the forgeries were accurate copies of the original plates they will be of increasing interest to collectors of occult and Mythos texts after the translation of Mayan writing in the later half of the 20th century and should be correspondingly rarer, if available at all.

Contents

If the plates were accurate copies of the originals, the text will be as above, save perhaps for some unintentional errors in copying. Otherwise, the text if read is revealed to be an essentially meaningless jumble of unrelated glyphs occasionally broken up by copied text from known Mayan codices and engravings.

Research

In addition to the basic facts of Maplethorpe Turner, the original plates, and their discovery as given previously, investigators seeking more information about the younger Turner's forgeries can find a few references to them in standard Mayan histories with a successful *Library Use* roll. These lump them together with other similar fakes created to capitalize on the growing interest in

The Grolier Fragment

Discovered in a Mexican cave in 1970, this still controversial 'codex' survives only partially and even some of the surviving pages are damaged. The text mirrors the astrological information of the Madrid Codex and the art is of a much lower quality.

The "Vatican Codex"

This (fictional) work is a hitherto unknown Mayan codex discovered in the Borgia papers in the Vatican library in the early 1970s. Experts examining the text were sharply divided, with some claiming it to be genuine with others insisted it was a clever forgery. Most tantalizing to seekers after the mysteries of the Mythos, one of the scholars examining the Codex stated that the contents sharply differed from certain elements of traditional Mayan religion and lore, describing a now-sunken Pacific continent from which the first men arose. Unfortunately Vatican officials, fearful of embarrassment, have refused further access to the codex, claiming it is too fragile for examination. (See Colin Wilson's *The Philosopher's Stone* for more information.)

Starting in the late 19th century, as interest in Mayan writing grew, a number of forgeries in the style of these codices have been produced, a group into which scholars have cast Turner's discovery. Occasionally the remains of what may have once been codices are discovered in Mayan ruins but to date no useful text has been recovered. Indeed due to the heat and humidity in which they have been kept, they are little more than lumps of lime and paint. Perhaps at some point some new development might unlock their secrets...

the Maya in the late 19th and early 20th century. Likewise a few rumors of Turner's criminal activities can be uncovered in contemporary newspaper stories about the fire that destroyed the Turner home in Brookline.

William Randolph Hearst's involvement in the Turner scandal can be discovered with a second *Library Use* roll. After that man's death in 1951, investigators who are able to gain access to his papers can find a few dealing with his agents' discovery of the forgery. These papers identify Albert Duchamp's description of the plates and can lead to the discovery of that source as well.

Wordsworth Turner and his forgeries

Left all but penniless upon his father's death, Wordsworth Turner (1877-1933) concocted a scheme to turn his father's discovery into riches for himself. Knowing as he did the proclivities of private collectors of Mayan antiquities, Turner reckoned that despite the public rejection of his father's translation of the Codex, the plates themselves would still be of interest to collectors. As only a very small number of other people had ever seen the original plates, Turner realized that he might reap a profit from their sale more than once if he could reproduce the plates himself, telling each buyer that they alone had the original, but for reasons of inheritance squabbles with his siblings and potential criticism from the academic establishment, the sale would not be publicly announced.

Turner obtained a quantity of copper and began his work. It is left to the Keeper if Turner faithfully reproduced the text as it appeared on the original plates or threw together a hodge-podge of known glyphs in a meaningless jumble. At least ten full sets of plates were sold to collectors, including the newspaperman William Randolph Hearst. Unfortunately for Turner, a research authenticating the plates (so that they might be insured) discovered a contemporary description that did not match the plates Turner was selling; subsequent testing determined the plates to be of recent manufacture. Hearst sued Turner and his scheme was made public.

Knowing he was ruined, Wordsworth set fire to the family home, destroying the unsold copies of his father's translation, several more sets of forged plates, the dies used to make these plates, and (allegedly) the original plates as well. Fleeing the country, the younger Turner circulated in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean, occasionally finding work with a private dig or expedition but, more often than not, eking a living acting as a translator. His death in Santo Domingo in 1933 was highly suspicious – the police ruled he strangled himself somehow – but not unexpected.

Finally, a separate *Library Use* roll can uncover the biographical information on Wordsworth Turner presented below, including his death.

Research into the younger Turner can locate a helpful lead for those hoping to translate the plates themselves. A *Library Use* roll can discover that all of the books that survived the fire that destroyed the Turner home were donated to the Boston Public Library. Among these was the elder Turner's copy of Dostmann's *Remnants of Lost Empires*. The catalogue notes heavy annotation to the work in Maplethorpe Turner's hand, "including a set of notes comparing certain illustrations with Mayan symbols".

Statistics

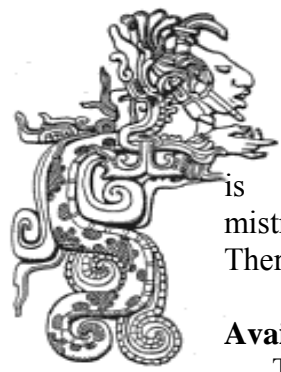
In Archaic Mayan Glyphs (-30% to skill). If the contents are based directly from the original plates, than some value equal or less than those of the original plates may be assigned. Even if the forgeries were carefully made copies of the original plates however, errors and mistakes are likely to have occurred therefore the reading time should increase at least by 50%, if not more.

Rites of the Ancient Maya Revealed ("The Turner Codex")

Description

A slim volume, perhaps 120 pages, 6" x 9½" bound in white cloth. The title and author are given on the cover in a dark green ink. A front page gives the title and author again, along with the work's subtitle "New Discoveries Aided by a New Method of Translating the Mayan Script". A date (1902) and place of publication are listed (Boston), but no publisher is named. Every copy has been hand-numbered in pencil by Turner, usually given as out of 1000. The paper





is of good quality and, barring mistreatment, the book will age well. There are no illustrations.

Availability

Turner financed the production of only 1000 copies of his book and, even a decade later, most of the copies remained unsold. Most, if not all, of the unsold copies were burned in the 1919 fire that destroyed the Turner home. During the next six decades occasional copies might be found; investigators seeking to buy this work can make a *Luck* roll once per month to locate a copy, once every two weeks if they have *Archaeology* or *Anthropology* (or other appropriate skill) over 60%. A few university libraries also obtained copies – Harvard, Duke, the University of Pennsylvania – though in the case of Harvard at least it is filed as a work of fiction

The meteoric career of Brian Lochnar and his rock group God's Lost Children (c.f.) brought the *Codex* a brief window of exposure in the mid 1980s. Crediting the work, among several esoteric texts, for inspiring his music, Lochnar interest in the book saw a surge in the value of the surviving copies. Several library's copies were stolen (including Duke's copy), presumably by overzealous fans of the group, causing most institutions that still possessed copy to remove it from circulation.

For a brief period in the late 1990s, an electronic copy was posted as part of the Project Gutenberg but a series of very unusual server failures corrupted the text, causing it to be withdrawn. Unfortunately the original copy of Turner's book used for this electronic version was destroyed in a fire and the files have not been reposted. Periodically file-sharing sites will list

PDF copies of the *Turner Codex* but these files are almost always bogus.

Contents

Skimming- These tablets record the rites of the god Kaiwan, "The Invisible One", "The Unspeakable", "Lord of the Great Sign", "Whisperer of Truth". These tablets are tribute to him that is the great lord and were carried from a far land after that kingdom was destroyed.

The codex holds the prayers of Kaiwan- invocations, blessings, oaths, and sanctifying rites for various sacred things. Most of these require blood sacrifice, special songs, and the correct alignment of stars. Kaiwan apparently is limited in certain ways and the spell described here help to weaken the bonds that constrain him. Apparently he sleeps in a distant city beyond (or perhaps beneath) a lake. The city is somehow tied to the star "That Which Goes Before".

Thorough Reading- These tablets record the rites and rituals of the Kaiwan, god who cannot be named. They were carried from the lost empire of the western sea by the priest Dhakuba to a new kingdom where they were preserved by Kaiwan's priests. This copy, dedicated to the new king, records the secrets of Kaiwan, who was the patron god of that kingdom.

The central purpose of the tablets is to record the rites of Kaiwan, "the Nameless" or "Unspeakable", who dwells in a city beyond a lake governed by the star we call Aldebaran. Kaiwan is a strange god, said to be of the world but also kept from it save by the enchantments described in the codex. He may only speak of true things but his truths are so mighty as to destroy men and the work of man. He is served by



Other Editions

eText version

This version is a text file of Turner's work, sloppily transcribed. The spelling of names is inconsistent and typos are common enough in the text to decrease its use particularly to those studying the codex's rites and spells.

In English. As *Turner Codex*, but Spell Multiplier is x1 and time to read is increased to 4 weeks.

PDF versions

This version, when it is an authentic copy of the *Turner Codex*, consists of scanned pages from of a hastily made photocopy of the book (the copyist's thumb appears on one page in three). The reproduction quality is low, making the text difficult to read.

In English. As *Turner Codex*, but Spell Multiplier is x2, time to read is increased to 5 weeks, and all *Read English* rolls to study the work are at -20%.

Spanish Version

An informal translation circulated among some of the faculty at Mexico's *Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia* (National School of Anthropology and History) in the late 1960s. Produced by an unknown staff member, this translation of Turner's book truncates most of the listed enchantments, but includes a section discussing Turner's expeditions in Mesoamerica, suggesting his papers might disclose previously unexplored sites in the Yucatan.

In Spanish. Sanity Loss 1/1d4 points, Cthulhu Mythos +3, Anthropology +1, three weeks to study and comprehend. Spells: *Para crear el carillón del Tezchaptl* (*Enchant Chime of Tezchaptl*).

From the Library of Brian Lochnar- Secrets of *The Turner Codex*

In English. Cheaply put together by Phantasic Productions, a third-rate publisher of occult and paranormal titles, this 1988 book was a crass attempt to cash in on Brian Lochnar's celebrity after his untimely death. The text contains extended but context-free quotations from the *Turner Codex* itself (infrequently misnamed the '*Tumer Codex*'), augmented heavily with lyrics from God's Lost Children's songs, guitar tabs, band photos, and allegedly similar texts from other surviving Mayan Codices. The text is frequently illustrated with gory imagery taken from Mayan, Aztec, and Olmec art, without regards for source or connection to the *Turner Codex*.

In English. Sanity Loss 0/1d2 points (possibly higher for editors and proof-reader), Cthulhu Mythos +0, 1 week to study and comprehend.

bizarre flying monsters that come down from the sky. Everything about the being is vague and unsettling, and he is said to hunger to return to our world from his distant dwelling.

There are many rites described. The greatest of these summons forth Kaiwan itself, using sacred stones, but only when Aldebaran is visible. Another rite

pledges a priest to Kaiwan's service, granting great power in exchange for loyalty, even after death. Those who have made this pact can forge the sacred chime of Tezchaptl, whose sound is pleasing to Kaiwan and brings forth his magic. These chimes can only be made in certain remote places, all mountains. There is also a song that his priests



might sing that pleases Kaiwan and allows them to use his magic to undo the sorcery of others. Those who desire to go before Kaiwan need purify themselves with a ritual drink containing the supplicant's blood, chocolate, and a great number of obscure herbs and other substances. Finally, a complex rite is described that would sanctify a temple or city to Kaiwan itself. Similar to the ritual that draws forth the god, a series of specially inscribed stones are set, but the area and power of this spell is far greater, as the god itself may freely dwell within the area circumscribed by the stones regardless of season or if his faithful have called it forth. He will hold that place, as if between his thumb and forefinger.

Research

In addition to the research previously discussed, investigators seeking information specifically on the *Turner Codex* itself can uncover several disparaging references to it in academic journals after its publication, including one scholarly work's open rejection of it as a lurid and hapless forgery. Turner's response was a barrage of angry letters to these and other journals. These can be located as well. Turner's continual insistence is that his translation must be accepted solely on his word as a gentleman and this should be enough to guarantee his scholarship. Turner also adamantly proclaims the fundamental misunderstanding of the Maya by his contemporaries who "imagine them perfect scholar priests, bloodless and rational as you fantasize yourselves to be, not living, breathing men who worshipped, and warred, and killed."

In the later 20th century a few Atlantis 'experts' reference the *Turner Codex* as evidence of their ancient

civilization claiming his metal plates were not Mayan at all, but some fragment of the lost Atlantean people. While these authors condemn the scholars who ignored Maplethorpe Turner, they reject his translation no less completely.

After the codex gained some notoriety after its use by God's Lost Children it was added to the usual list of 'Satanic' texts by Christian groups, though none of them actually make reference to the book's contents. Internet searches tend to turn up warnings from these groups if they are not directly related to Brian Lochnar or his music directly.

Investigators seeking to purchase a copy of the book will likely find multiple copies of the nearly useless Phantastic Productions version. Anyone foolish enough to purchase it sight unseen will almost certainly end up with this useless edition rather than Turner's original work.

Statistics

In English. Sanity Loss 1d2/1d6; Cthulhu Mythos +4; Anthropology +1, Hieratic Nacaal +1. 3 weeks to study and comprehend. Spell Multiplier x3. Spells: Great Prayer of Kaiwan (Call/Dismiss Hastur), Chime of Tezchaptl, Preparation of the Xocoatl (Brew Space Mead), The Unspeakable Oath (Unspeakable Promise), Rite of the Stones (Free Hastur)

The Music of God's Lost Children

Description

Founded by charismatic front man Brian Lochnar (c.f.), God's Lost Children (frequently shortened to GLC) were a briefly but intensely popular American



heavy metal group. The group released two full-length album's before founder Lochnar's death in 1988, a self-titled release and *Unspeakable*; a 1990 'best-of' album (*Forever Lost*) collected tracks from both albums as well as a few live tracks. Bootleg recordings of their concerts (all from the *Unspeakable* tour) have also been released in Japan and Europe.

The band's music was guitar-driven heavy metal, with a focus on exceptional technical skill on Lochnar's part as well as extensive over-dubbing and studio work on their two releases. Hundreds of tracks were overlaid on some recordings and every audio technique available at the time was applied to their creation.

Availability

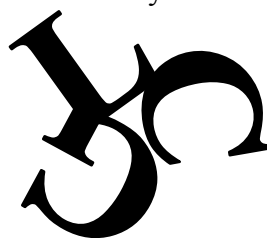
All three God's Lost Children releases are available in vinyl and CD formatting. The self-titled and best-of albums both sold over 500,000 copies while *Unspeakable* sold over 1 million. Though the band's popularity declined rapidly in the 1990s with the rise of other artists and styles, used copies of all three recordings can be found at low prices in used record stores or via the Internet. Bootleg recordings of several tour dates from the *Unspeakable* Tour (and Lochnar's final performance in Jacksonville especially) can be obtained at somewhat higher prices. Due to licensing disputes with the band's label, officially none of their songs are available in MP3 format online but can be found without difficulty on file-sharing sites of questionable legality. Investigators may also hear a track from the band if they listen to a metal radio station with a roll of POW x 1 or less per hour; this will be substantially higher the closer the year is to (but not before, obviously) 1987.

Contents

God's Lost Children

The cover depicts the logo of the band, the three letters of its name in silver on a black background, tumbled together forming a strange shape. Viewers making a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll note the similarities with the dreaded Yellow Sign, though the cover art is completely mundane.

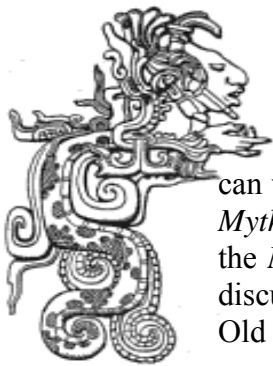
The eleven tracks are a relentless blend of heavy-metal chords, overlaying



an almost trance-like beat. In certain songs hundreds of tracks – consisting of chants, obscure

instruments, human screams, and animal noises – are mixed producing a wall of sound effect that is impressive as it is ear-splitting. Listeners with *Art (Music)* of 20% or higher will be impressed with the quality of musicianship, particularly that of Brian Lochnar's guitar work, which is furious, highly technical, and flawless. While the music is unmistakably in the heavy metal (sometimes bordering on speed metal) style, the lyrical content lacks the unsubtle sexual references or reflexive anarchistic tropes that feature so often in the music of those acts. Instead they are more meditative, almost dream-like imagery, with a certain vague and menacing quality, almost as if the whole thing is one tension-building unresolved chord.

Of particular interest are two tracks- "The Dark Ones Rise" and "Old Times, New Times", as their lyrics are said in the liner notes to be taken directly from the *Turner Codex*. Careful listeners to the chanting underlying several tracks



can with a successful *Listen* and *Cthulhu Mythos* roll identify short quotes from the *Necronomicon*. All these quotes are discussions of the return of the Great Old Ones.

Unspeakable

The cover is a triptych of photos of the three band members (Lochnar, Schwartz, and Holland), each bound in a straight jacket. Holland glares at the viewer, his head low. Schwartz has his head turned to the side and is muzzled. Lochnar stares straight ahead, his mouth

Extremely High Fidelity

For investigators seeking to explore the Mythos effects of Lochnar's music, only the vinyl release's record the subsonic and hypersonic frequencies that produce occult effects or extreme reactions in listeners. Sanity penalties should be reduced or eliminated accordingly for digital versions.

a bloodied mess, two streaks of blood framing his chin. Behind each is a large stone pillar engraved on which are the letters G (Schwartz), L (Lochnar), and C (Holland). Scribbled across the front is the title, as if painted in blood. Careful examination of Lochnar reveals he is wearing an onyx v-shaped earring, set with nine diamonds; anyone familiar with the spell *Free Hastur* will see a parallel between this shape and the monolith arrangement in the spell. The reverse of the cover shows the band members in full regalia standing behind a bonfire. Lochnar has his hands raised above his head. An *Astronomy* roll notices his arms frame the constellation Taurus.

Musically this album was more skillfully produced than *God's Lost Children*. The sixteen tracks are of a similar style to those on the earlier record as are the lyrics, but the sound is cleaner and the song's hooks are more

immediate. There is, however, something deeply unnerving about the experience of listening to the album the first time; many listeners experience a powerful sense of foreboding or like they are being watched. Sanity cost upon first listen is 0/1 points. While the music is as striking (and grating) as the previous release, the title track is the most striking- a successful *Listen* roll identifies a particularly curious back-masked section of the song which can, with a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll, be identified as in the Xothic language; this discovery costs 0/1d2 points of Sanity. If Xothic can be understood, it discovered to be a prayer to Hastur.

On several tracks there are a few guest musicians; one of these, a saxophonist, is credited as "The Royal Pant", which an *Idea* roll (if necessary) highlights is an anagram for Nyarlathotep. (The saxophonist can be identified as a studio musician named Herbie "Doc" Hike. If contacted he says the "Royal Pant" pseudonym was Lochnar's idea though he is unsure why he requested the change be made.)

Forever Lost: the Best of God's Lost Children

The cover art is the band, photographed from behind, at the conclusion of their final performance in Jacksonville. Lochnar is at center-stage, back lit and casting a long shadow, while Holland holds his bass aloft in one hand and Schwartz pushes his drum-kit off its weird faux-stone riser. The audience is awash in flash bulbs and cigarette lighters held aloft. Interior photos show Lochnar earlier in his career; in one picture of him dressed as Doktor Black, his guitar appears to have a curious symbol painted on it (again a mundane and inexpertly painted version of the

Yellow Sign; *Cthulhu Mythos* roll will identify it if the Yellow Sign has not been seen previously.)

This record contains the album versions of “The Dark Ones Rise” and “Unspeakable” as well as a live version of “Old Times, New Times” (recorded in Houston, Texas) which includes a section where Lochnar leads the audience in a weird chant; this can be identified as a portion of the spell Free Hastur if a copy of that spell has been studied, otherwise a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll can identify it as Mythos related. Hearing the chant assists anyone attempting to learn this spell, increasing their spell multiplier by 1. The song concludes with an ear-splitting guitar solo by Lochnar; investigators who have encountered a byakhee will recognize it as an imitation of that creature’s cry.

Research

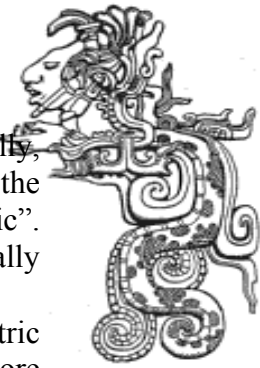
Investigators seeking more information on God’s Lost Children will have an easy time finding information about the band but face a more difficult task in uncovering the occult secrets behind their music. American investigators can, with a *Know* roll, recall the basic outline of the band’s history and might even own a copy of *Unspeakable* if appropriate.

The details of Lochnar’s career can be uncovered easily with a single *Library Use* roll; while far from the most popular figure in music, Lochnar’s over-the-top stage antics, guitar skills, occult trappings, and tragic death have combined to make him the subject of multiple fan tribute sites that accurately cover his public career. Several biographies also exist but tend to focus on his music rather than his personal life.

A second *Library Use* roll will track down a 1994 article for the music

magazine *Cake* entitled “Brujo, Bully, and Bad-Ass: Brian Lochnar, the Zapatistas, and Rock-n-Roll Magic”. This article includes a few generally ignored aspects of Lochnar’s life.

- During Lochnar’s psychiatric hospitalization he routinely wore women’s clothing. An unofficial interview with an unnamed former nurse suggests Lochnar’s troubles were a result of his childhood injury that caused damage to his frontal lobe exacerbated by heavy drug and alcohol use.
- Lochnar claimed that after an accident when he was 13 he spoke to a “god” but not “God”.
- A former girlfriend from his Doktor Black days indicated that Lochnar’s interest in the occult was far from an act and that the two of them practiced ritual magic (or as the article says “magick”) together, including Tantra and certain spells he learned in Mexico.
- Regarding this time in Mexico the author, using information obtained from Lochnar’s mother, records his two year period in Mexico, from 1980-82. In Mexico Lochnar roamed about, claimed to have met with Maoist rebels in Oaxaca (the author stretches the truth past breaking to make the Zapatista connection) and have studied with an ancient *brujo* in Chiapas (the article translates this as warlock and suggests Lochnar is derived from “lock/war”). The *brujo* is said to have taught him the secret rites of ‘Quixan’, which is described as “the Voodoo Spirit of Music, also





called the ‘Yellow (or Nameless) One’.

- The article concludes by painting Lochnar as a proto-revolutionary visionary, glossing over his self-destructive habits or darker interest completely.

Investigators may wish to track down former associates of Lochnar’s. Unfortunately most of these individuals are dead or very difficult to track down, even within a few years of his death. Members of the gang Satan’s Sadists, a motorcycle group that provided security during the Unspeakable tour are almost all dead (many in the Bellaire Arms fire) or serving lengthy prison terms. Lochnar’s mother died in a house fire in 1991 and his estate was broken up among several distant relations. His bandmates Mark Holland and Kevin Schwartz survived the Bellaire Arms fire. Holland is alive into the present day; he lives in Key West comfortably off the band’s residuals. He will refuse interviews of all sorts as he is “tired of this old rock-star bullshit”. Schwartz unsuccessfully attempted to continue God’s Lost Children, replacing Lochnar and Holland with other performers. They conducted a much-ridiculed state-fair “reunion” tour in 1991 and then went on hiatus. He died in 1993 from an overdose of cocaine.

Statistics

None of these recordings grant any increase to skills or convey any spells. Any *Sanity* costs or any other skill rolls are listed in their descriptions.

Credits:

Text and Layout: Bret Kramer

Proof-reading and general assistance:
Chad Bowser and Jeff Okamoto

My thanks to Tom Lynch and Miskatonic River Press for letting me put this together, the many dedicated and faithful scholars of the Mayan people whose work I cheerfully misrepresented, and heavy metal musicians everywhere.

